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Somoza Completing Book On Bay of Pigs Invasion

WASHINGTON, Aug. 24 (UPI) — Senator Luis Somoza, ex-president of Nicaragua, said he is completing a book on the ill-fated invasion of the Bay of Pigs, Cuba, in which he tries to justify that action, of which he feels a co-participant, and at the same time defend the position of the late president, John F. Kennedy.

Somoza was president when the expedition sailed from his country. He said he expected the book to be published before the end of the year.

The senator said he advocates an invasion of Cuba and he criticized the "absence of decisions" on the part of the Organization of American States (OAS) in an attempt to solve the Cuban problem. Somoza made these statements to United Press International during a quick visit to this city.

"Private Business Trip"

The ex-president of Nicaragua said he came to Washington on private business, dealing with his sugar interests, but that he had conferred with Jack Hood Vaughn, under secretary of state for Latin American affairs, last week.

Commenting on the U. S. government's recommendation to eliminate the tax on the import of sugar, Somoza said this proved President Johnson's desire to "share the economic well-being of the U. S. with Latin American countries."

Somoza said he had "reservations" with respect to the Bay of Pigs versions in the books written by Theodore C. Sorenson and Arthur Schlesinger Jr., whose principal chapters have been published in two U. S. magazines in recent weeks. "I feel that the whole truth has not been told," Somoza said, adding that his book will contain the "version of an actor, because I was an actor in that drama."

Both Sorenson's and Schlesinger's interpretations have caused much debate in the United States.

"There were many of us involved, and today I think that at that time I was a coward," Somoza said. Although he didn't elaborate, he said his "cowardice" had consisted in not giving full support to the Cuban forces which made up the invading force, "in spite of the fact that Nicaragua was the one which really assumed responsibility as an aggressor."

He Assails Advisers

Among the "many responsible" for the failure of the Bay of Pigs, Somoza pointed to "President Kennedy's advisers," but he didn't name names. He said that Kennedy was "pushed" and that the way things developed demonstrated that those advisers "were incapable."

Somoza said: "Kennedy was pushed to go to Vienna to see Nikita Khrushchev when the Cuban invasion had already been decided. That was one of the many errors made in those

days." As for fixed responsibility for the failure, he said "the obligation to go all the way wasn't carried out."

Asked if this was a criticism of the last minute decision not to give U. S. air cover to the invading forces, Somoza said: "Air protection was one aspect. But all the way means everything that's necessary. That was the obligation."

Somoza said that Kennedy was the victim of his inexperience as a recently-installed president. "I can honestly say that 90 per cent of the errors committed during my administration were made during the first six months," he pointed out.

The Nicaraguan senator said the reciprocal Inter-American assistance pact of Rio de Janeiro and other Inter-American documents "will be wet paper" and "will have no reason for being" until the OAS adopts "concrete decisions" to solve the Cuban crisis. "It appears there is no desire to make such decisions," he added.

He said the argument about the free determination of people was not valid while Cuba is not able to hold elections, and that this factor, combined with Inter-American obligations, justifies an invasion of Cuba.

On Dominican Republic

Citing the Dominican Republic, Somoza said this country, like many others in Latin America, was under the influence of a rapidly-increasing communist infiltration. He said the Alliance for Progress has meant a truce in many cases, but that communism continues to be a potential danger and that nothing would be accomplished by an "ostrich policy."

Somoza declared he favored a permanent Inter-American peace force to cooperate in the fight against communism, but that such force must be invested with specific powers "so that it won't become a whip at the service of international whipping boys, but an efficient instrument to combat communism."

Somoza praised President Johnson, saying he is an "extraordinary" man.

MORI/CDF